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while it possesses qualities which are peculiar to itself, it at the same time partakes largely of the character of both.

It is in its more decorative aspect that we wish to regard terra cotta at present. In decorating stone work the sculptor is confronted with a rectangular tube of stern, uncompromising material, whereas in terra cotta he possesses a plastic mass, easily manipulated and modeled, and assuming with equal readiness any form that the mind may suggest, wherein lies the superiority of terra cotta, that permits the greatest magnificence of effect with great economy of cost. The relief of ornament in terra cotta need not be so limited as in stone, and that system of decoration known as "cameo" is as easily rendered by terra cotta as the "intaglio," one to which stone is somewhat confined. Repeated ornament is especially easy to obtain, and although repetition of molded ornament is not a thing for vigorous imitation, there are occasions when it is effective as well as economical.

Terra cotta possesses one great advantage over stone for its use in cities, and that is, the surface, which, after its baptism of fire, is capable of successfully resisting the strongest gases and acids that the foulest city air contains, and one which every shower of rain restores to its pristine freshness, washing off the tender over-tones which smoke and soot so delicately spread.

The very facility with which terra cotta can be molded into every conceivable form of ornament is indeed at once its greatest virtue and its greatest drawback. There is a continual temptation to overload the material with ornament, and indulge in prettiness and sensuous display, and thus its unrestrained use is likely to militate in the worst way against the high and pure laws of true architecture. The very ease with which it realizes the modeler's thought, which is one of its best qualities, is also a quality which tends to the production of a large amount of poor and overdone work, and also to a standard of work which is unrestrained by the severity which stone, to a certain degree, imposes on design, and unless the designer is capable of severity and self-denial, a class of work will be produced that is frivolous and lacking in fibre.

In all history we find that those peoples who have had to struggle with physical conditions and earn their harvest at the expense of hard labor, have become nationally more noble and dignified, and possessed of greater activity and courage than have those peoples where nature gives almost without the asking, destroying in her prodigality all methods of initiative action. It is the labor they demand, and the skill that has to be employed before they record the thought of the artist, that give to stone and marble the nobility and dignity they possess in architecture. Terra cotta, however, possesses no such barrier before yielding, but, being plastic to a degree, may be said to leap forward to the modeler and, meeting him almost half way, realizes at once the

grandest and broadest conceptions with an ease unequaled in no other material.

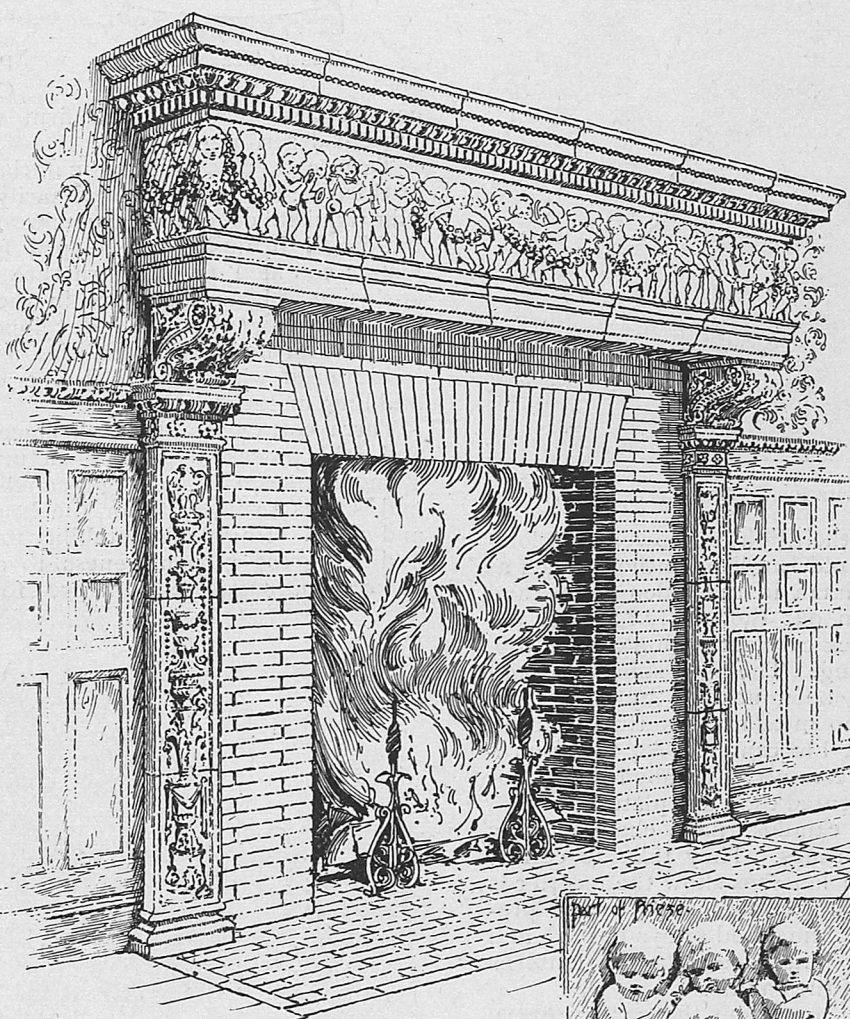
The use of color in terra cotta is beginning to absorb attention of the architect, and in terra cotta he has in his hand a new material that is more susceptible to color treatment than all others. The day has happily dawned when the exteriors of buildings will present to the eye pleasing varieties of color, whose decorative effect cannot be overestimated, and terra cotta is *par excellence* the medium by which color may be restored to our cities.

#### DECORATIVE NOTES.

A HANDSOME and moderate-priced floor has a field of oak laid in a diamond pattern, interlacing. The border is of stripes of oak and walnut, the walnut strips separated by a line of maple. The border, which is eight and three-quarter inches wide, is twenty-two cents per lineal foot and the field thirty-five cents per square foot. There is a difference in price between the thin and the thick parquet, and this depends a great deal upon the woods used and the more or less elaboration of the design. Many of these floorings are exquisitely beautiful, the borders being laid out in arabesques, Moorish, Egyptian or geometrical designs. Borders alone are often laid upon old floors to surround the central rug. They come in an infinite variety of design and in every combination of hard wood. The prices vary from twenty-five cents to \$3.00 per square foot when laid. The centre part of the floor may always be filled up with thin goods or parquet to match after the borders have been laid. The standard width for wood carpeting is thirty-six inches, but it may be ordered in any width up to twelve feet. Wainscotings are made up to order in any wood and of any pattern, and some of the panel wainscotings seen were

very handsome and especially adapted to halls, vestibules and dining-rooms.

THOSE who profess to follow nature seem sometimes rather to be dragging her in the dust. There is a wider view of nature, which includes human nature and that selective and idealizing instinct which is natural to man. It is a long way from being yet proved that the naturalistic designer is more "true to nature" than another. It is one thing to study nature and another to pretend that studies are works of art. In no branch of design has it ever been held by the masters (least of all could it be held by the masters of ornament) that nature was enough. It is only the very callow student who swallows nature whole. "Lor', how natural!" bursts out the admiring rustic. The artist, in like case, thinks to himself, "What perfect art!"



DECORATED MANTELPIECE IN TERRA COTTA. DESIGNED BY N. PIERSON AND EXECUTED BY THE PERTH AMBOY TERRA COTTA COMPANY.

